

[English]

Promotion of Wildlife and Ecology

*70. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the United States have agreed to expand their cooperation for promotion of wildlife and ecology;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether other countries also agreed to expand their cooperation in this regard; and

(d) if so, the names of such countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b). In the meeting of the Working group on Environment and Ecology of the Indo-US Sub-Commission on Science and Technology, which was held in New Delhi on 22-23 October, 1991, the areas identified for future cooperation between the two countries are conservation, environmental education, environmental information exchange, pollution prevention and clean technologies.

(c) and (d). While cooperation exists with a large number of countries, collaborative projects in the field of environment are with the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, Denmark, Canada and Australia.

Deforestation, Shifting Cultivation and Poaching in Western Ghats

*71. SHRI MANJAY LAL: Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the Government are aware of the deforestation, shifting cultivation and poaching in the Western Ghats threatening the existence of flora and fauna besides causing severe depletion of the forests;

(b) if so, the precise details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government for the preservation of wildlife and for maintaining the ecological balance in the Western Ghats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b). The Western Ghats run through the states of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamilnadu.

No case of any large scale deforestation has been reported, however, cases of smuggling of sandalwood have come to the notice of the Central Government.

Sporadic cases of poaching of wild animals particularly elephants have been reported. Instances of sporadic cases of shifting cultivation in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala have been reported.

(c) Central Government have been assisting the State Governments through a number of centrally sponsored scheme for protection of forests and wildlife. The wild Life (protection) Act has been made more stringent.

The Central Government have also initiated an Integrated Action Oriented Research Development and extension scheme related to ecology of the area.

Bifurcation of South Eastern Railway
72. SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KON-
ATHALA: Will the MINISTER OF RAILWAYS be pleased to state: